



Block Exploration

Standard Connection:

M.MD.PK4.2

M.G.PK4.1, 2, 5

S.PS.PK4.3a

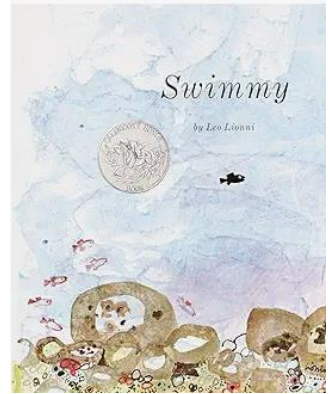
PD.FM.PK4.1, 4, 5

Enduring Understanding(s):

- Like humans, animals are part of interdependent communities that are affected by and adapt to the environment that surrounds them.
- Animals have unique characteristics. Some of these characteristics help them to survive in their habitat.

Essential Question(s):

- How do animals form communities, work together, and use and adapt to their environment?

Materials	Vocabulary	Books
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Swimmy</i> • blocks (various types & shapes) • other block props (e.g., people figures, toy vehicles) • books or images about communities and buildings 	<p>community: all the plants or animals that live together in the same area</p> <p>collaborate: to work with someone else on a project or idea</p> <p>notice: to be aware of or observe</p>	

Intro to Centers	
Preparation: Set up materials.	
"In <i>Swimmy</i> , Swimmy's home was in the water. What do you notice ?"	Show illustrations. Children respond.
"The community Swimmy lived in was made up of other fish, sea animals, and plants."	
"Here are images of some other types of communities . What do you notice ?"	Show images. Children respond.
"Today in Blocks, you can build your own community using these materials. What do you notice ?"	Show materials. Children respond.
"You can also collaborate – work together – to build a block community."	
"You could construct a community like the pictures in <i>Swimmy</i> or the other communities we discussed."	Display images from <i>Swimmy</i> for children to view while building.

During Centers:

Invite children to engage with the blocks and props. Model what block playing might look and sound like. Model the clean-up routine. During Centers, encourage children to build with one another. Discuss the shapes and sizes within their structures.

Guiding Questions During Centers:

- What materials and props do you need to build a structure?
- What did you notice about the structures in these images/books that could help you build your structure?
- How can you work together? Which blocks will you use? How many?
- What are you thinking about as you build? What is your inspiration?

Thinking and Feedback:

Notice the challenges children are having while in the Block Center and invite them to share their dilemma with the group.

Documentation:

Collect samples of the children's work as well as photographs of their process; use the documentation to launch a discussion during Thinking and Feedback.

Provocation:

Encourage children to create communities on a smaller scale (using LEGOs, cube blocks, etc.) on a table. Observe and document communities around the area.

Differentiation/Accommodation:

For Intro to Centers, children with limited verbal skills can use a pre-programmed voice output device to answer questions about the story. (Keep in mind these will likely be closed-ended questions, as those are easiest to program into devices.) This can also be used to help children answer Guiding Questions. During Centers, provide a variety of writing and building materials to meet the children's various fine motor and sensory needs.